maintains a network of 16 gauges and discharge stations in the Cauvery basin. Out of these, 6 stations are located on the main stem of the Cauvery river. The discharge observation is done with the help of current meters and no new equipment is considered necessary.

(c) During the water year commencing from 1st June, 1991, the quantity of water that has been gauged at Billigundulu station on the Cauvery near the border between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu works out to be 3832 million cubic metres upto 16th August, 1991.

Relationship with ASEAN Countries

3996. SHRI MUKUL BALKRISHNA WASNIK: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to have a close and formal relationship with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN);

(b) if so, the details of the initiatives taken in this regard; and

(c) the reaction of the ASEAN thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) India has always attached importance to close linkages with ASEAN as a grouping, in addition to the existing friendly relations between India and individual ASEAN countries.

(b) and (c) Consultations are underway on a proposal for India to start a "Sectoral Dialogue" with ASEAN.

Market Intelligence Centres

3999. SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have set up Market Intelligence Centres in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the places where such Centres have been set-up;

(c) the objectives of setting up these Centres;

(d) whether a study has been conducted into the functioning of these Centres and their utility to the farmers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI *MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN*): (a) *Yes, Sir.*

(b) The Market Intelligence Centres are located at Lucknow, Calcutta, Patna, Bhopal, Jaipur, Bombay, Madras, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Shillong, Bangalore, New Delhi, Trivandrum and Bhubneshwar.

(c) The objectives of setting up of Market Intelligence Units were (i) to undertake regular tours of markets in their respective regions by the staff, (ii) to impart on the spot guidance to the primary reporting agencies of the State Governments about collection of market intelligence, (iii) to furnish periodical reports on current price and market situation, crop prospects and outlook, (iv) to maintain liaison with the concerned departments of the State Governments connected with crop production, food and civil supplies administration, economics and statistics bureaus, land records and agencies connected with procurement of various agricultural commodities and (v) to undertake periodical studies on various aspects of marketing.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The study has shown that collection and reporting of price data by these Centres have enabled the Government to frame the price policy, prevented the distress sale by the farmers and enabled the farmers to get the remunerative price of their produce. Dissemination of market intelligence by mass media in the rural programmes and crop intelligence fortnightly reports at times not only helped the farmers but also Government to take corrective measures as and when needed. In addition the study has recommended that these units should be strengthened by providing more staff.

[*Translation*]

Speed Post Service in Rajasthan

4000. SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the cities in Rajasthan where Speed Post Service facilities are available?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): Speed Post

facilities in Rajasthan are available in the following cities/towns:

UNDER NATIONAL NET WORK

Jaipur

UNDER POINT TO POINT SERVICE

(i) Jaipur (ii) Ajmer (iii) Jodhpur (iv) Udaipur (v) Kota (vi) Bikaner and (vii) Pali.

[*English*]

Kuriyarkutty-Karappara Multipurpose Project

4001. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kuriyarkutty-Karappara Multi-purpose Project in Kerala is pending with the Union Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The revised irrigation component of Kuriyarkutty-Karappara Project of Kerala estimated to cost Rs. 60.16 crores was received in the Central Water Commission in June, 1990. The modified power component of the project estimated to cost Rs. 131.03 crores was received in the Central Electricity Authority in January, 1991. The Screening Committee of the Central Water Commission after examination found that the irrigation component of the project has not been prepared keeping in view the decisions of the Expert Committee. As the compliance would have materially affected the project proposal, the project was returned to the State Government in June, 1991 for modifications. The Ministry of Environment and Forests refused permission to the State Government to carry out detailed investigations in the area falling under Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary. Therefore, the State Government is not in a position to complete detailed investigation for power component.

Special Foodgrains Production Programme

4002. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts in Kerala covered under the Special Foodgrains Production Programme;

(b) the progress made so far under the programme in Kerala;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to bring more districts in Kerala under this scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Five districts in Kerala are covered under the Integrated Programme for Rice Development (IPRD).

(b) Under the Programme of 1991-92, so far, 5791 quintals of certified paddy seeds, 685 kg. herbicides, 235 kg. pesticides and 43 sprayers have been provided to the farmers on subsidised cost. Besides, field demonstrations on improved rice production technology have been organised over 112 ha. on the farmers' holdings.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal so far, to bring more districts in Kerala under this scheme.

Sponsor of Indian Students for higher studies in Australia

4003. SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any private agencies are sponsoring Indian students for higher studies in Australia;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) whether the Government are aware of reports of cheating of students recruited by these agencies in Australia; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to regulate the activities of these agencies?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) to (d) Information on the subject is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.